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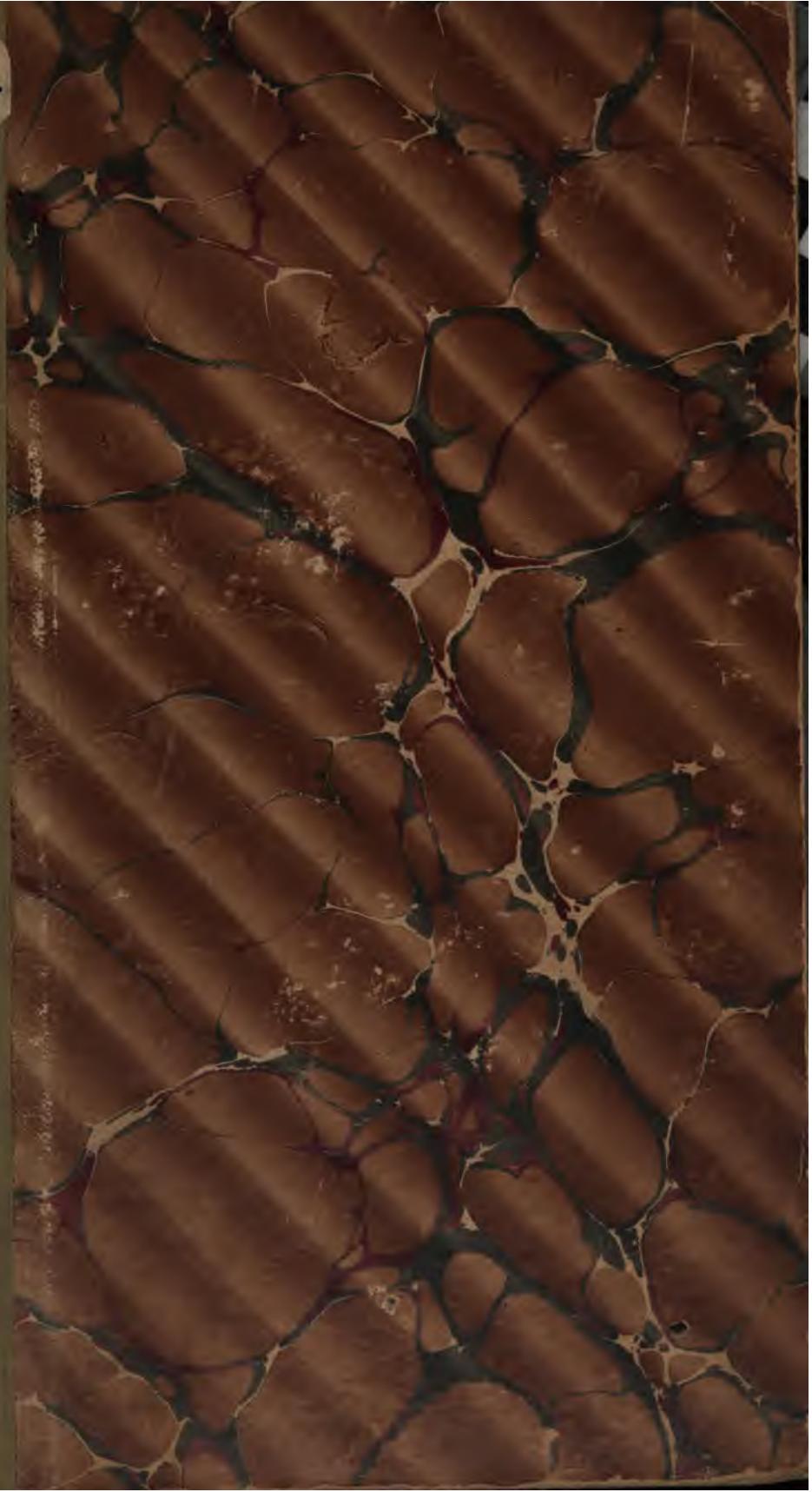
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**PRESIDENT
CHESTER A. ARTHUR**

ADDRESS BY

WILLIAM E. CHANDLER

AT FAIRFIELD, VERMONT

ON AUGUST 19, 1903

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMPLETION BY THE
STATE OF VERMONT OF A MONUMENT AND
TABLET TO MARK THE BIRTHPLACE OF
PRESIDENT CHESTER A. ARTHUR**



**CONCORD, N. H.
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Laura S. Mayo

PRESIDENT ARTHUR.

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MR. CHANDLER'S ADDRESS.

This occasion must have a prevailing tone of sadness, first, because we cannot fail to take notice that while the four years' term for which Garfield and Arthur were elected is only eighteen years behind us, the leaders and nearly all the members of the administration have passed from earth. "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away and another generation cometh."

SADNESS OF THE OCCASION.

Garfield was inaugurated March 4, 1881, and was fatally stricken by the bullet of the assassin on the 2d of the next July. Arthur survived his term, which ended March 4, 1885, only until November 18, 1886. Blaine, Windom, Kirkwood, and Hunt; Frelinghuysen, Folger, Howe, Brewster, McCulloch, Gresham, and Hatton have gone from earth. Only McVeagh and James, Teller, Lincoln and myself—five out of thirteen—still live as the survivors of an administration not so very long ago in existence. "For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow and there is none abiding." "Man is like to Vanity. His days are as a shadow that passeth away."

In accordance with invariable custom, as the impressive beginning of the inauguration of Pope Pius X a torch of flax was held aloft which flamed up for a few seconds and then wholly died out, whereupon the chaplain chanted the anthem, "*Sic transit gloria mundi.*"

Moreover, the gloomy thoughts thus suggested are deepened as we approach consideration of the career of President Arthur, by the solemn fact that he came to occupy and administer his high office only by reason of the untimely taking off by assassination of the president elected by the people. It has been my fortune to know and to converse with eleven presidents, beginning with President Pierce, from my own state, who employed me as a boy in his pleasant service in the summer and fall of 1852, and made me his guest at the White House in March, 1855. By the three martyred presidents I was treated with exceeding kindness and consideration. President Lincoln, in March, 1865, signed my commission as judge-advocate-general of the navy, and decided upon my subsequent transfer to the treasury department as assistant secretary, which, however, did not take place while he was alive. President Garfield nominated me for solicitor-general in the department of justice; and President McKinley in many ways by his courtesies and other evidences of good will gained my deepest affection. These personal facts it is proper for me to mention in order to emphasize the effect upon me of the recollection of the tragic endings of the lives of these presidents of the Republic.

Waiting a few weeks ago in the ante-room of Presi-

dent Roosevelt, and noticing the absence of all mere form and ceremony and of all signs of power at the White House, the same as in the days of 1865, 1881, and 1897, it was to me most difficult to realize that I had been very near to and had almost witnessed the shooting to bloody death of three presidents by the foul hands of brutal assassins. Are the unostentatious chiefs of a Republican state, holding their offices for only four years, who are powerless to take away any liberties or privileges of the people, to be no safer from the bullets and bombs of regicides than the tyrant upon a despotic throne, who, if not forcibly removed, may for the whole of a long lifetime oppress his helpless subjects?

Great as was the horror and grief of the American people at the murders of their presidents, it is some relief to realize, as we now do, that in each of the three cases the assassin stood practically alone in his deed of murder, and represented no desire of any considerable number of persons of any class, either south or north. Thank Heaven, our future presidents have no lessons in conduct to take to heart by reason of the frenzied and fatal assaults on three of their predecessors, made by wretched beings as to each of whom it may be said that his motive cannot be comprehended, and that the responsibility for his senseless act was his alone.

THE TRIBUTES TO ARTHUR'S MEMORY.

But, however painful may be the feelings first aroused on the recollection of the circumstances of the accession of Chester A. Arthur to the presidency, there is nothing but joyousness in recalling the man himself, his charac-

ter and conduct, and his relations with his fellow-men in private and public life. Tributes to his memory have been spoken since his death by friends who knew and loved him well. When the legislature of the state of New York honored their citizen by appropriate proceedings in the capitol at Albany on April 20, 1887, Benjamin H. Brewster spoke with elegance of diction and deep emotion concerning the characteristics of the president whom he had admired and served as attorney-general in his cabinet. At the same time Chauncey M. Depew, with more than his usual felicity, depicted Arthur's "high qualities;—his magnanimity, his gentleness, and all the other traits of his nature which have commanded our love and honor." At a stated meeting of the bar of the city of New York on December 13, 1887, Daniel G. Rollins laid upon the altar of the memory of the president, with whom he had been most intimate, a recital of affectionate and judicious praise.

Ben Perley Poore, in the *Bay State Monthly* for May, 1884, while Arthur was living, gave a brief sketch of his career, and, as a journalist of wide experience, expressed in terms of moderation his favorable judgment of the president and his existing administration.

On June 13, 1899, personal friends unveiled in Madison Square a bronze statue of President Arthur, and its formal presentation to New York city was made by Elihu Root, our present secretary of war, who spoke of Arthur as one of his personal associates and friends in his home, "who knew him as he was and admired and loved him long before the world knew him."

The friend of President Arthur, who now speaks to you, during the summer of 1886, while the subject of his thought was painfully passing on toward the future life, prepared a sketch of his career for Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography, which, except in the closing paragraph, is only a narration made with an accuracy which time has tested without complaint of the principal events of Arthur's life, including his service as president.

Therefore it is not my purpose to give the time which I am on this occasion permitted to consume to any complete or lengthy repetition of facts of varying magnitude which I have once carefully recorded in memory of the president who charmed me by his unvarying friendship, and honored me by employing and sustaining me as the head of the navy department during three years of his administration. I wish only (1) to speak of the circumstances which led to his nomination as vice-president; (2) to recall briefly some of the work of his administration as president; (3) to dwell specially upon the most important part of his career, his opposition to slavery and his zeal in the war for the Union, which together led to his public prominence; and (4) to endeavor to depict the character of the man, coming from heredity and his varied experiences, as that character was seen and understood by those who knew him best.

ARTHUR'S LIFE TO THE CLOSE OF HIS COLLECTORSHIP.

The childhood of Arthur was fortunate. Born October 5, 1830, in a secluded Vermont village, in this

lovely town of Fairfield, his education was supervised by a patient, noble father, the Rev. William Arthur, who was a clergyman, an author, and for a time the principal of a country academy at Williston, Vermont, who spared no pains in the instruction of his oldest boy. Under these conditions it is no wonder that the exemplary youth, of gentle manners and sweet disposition, made rapid progress in his books and became himself a teacher, and when eighteen years of age was graduated at Union college, Schenectady, in New York, to which state his family had removed in his earliest days.

Few distractions delayed the young man while studying law, and at the age of twenty-three he was admitted to the bar in New York city, and had moderate success from the first. Coming of age at the precise time when both the great political parties had declared that the compromises of 1850 were a finality, and that thereafter there should be no agitation of the slavery question, he voted as a Henry Clay Whig for General Scott for president, but, by reason of his anti-slavery sentiments, immediately entered into the work of combining the forces of liberty in the organization of a new and true party, the Republican party of 1856. Before the war began, but when the war clouds were in the horizon, on January 1, 1861, when he was only thirty years of age, Gov. Edwin D. Morgan appointed him engineer-in-chief of the militia of the state of New York with the rank of brigadier-general, and he began his unpretentious but indispensable and important work, which he continued as acting quartermaster-general, and as inspector-general, of so organizing the forces of the Empire state that

this commonwealth was able promptly to respond to the calls of President Lincoln for troops for the suppression of the slaveholders' rebellion.

With the exception of an inspection of the New York troops in the army of the Potomac, he did not serve actively in the field ; but, enlarging his law practice in 1862, he also became active in Republican politics, and so continued for ten years, working quietly but faithfully in private and public duties, until, on November 20, 1871, he was appointed by President Grant collector of the port of New York, which post he held until suspended by President Hayes in July, 1878.

Mr. Arthur's record as collector of the port of New York is as immaculate as is his record seven years later as president of the United States. Why, then, was that man removed from the smaller office who was worthy of the highest post in this government? The true reason is easily seen and is unmistakable. He was removed by President Hayes for political reasons,—in order to help one faction in New York Republican politics in its efforts to overcome another faction.

General Grant had been president for eight years. Senator Conkling had been made one among several candidates for the presidential nomination in 1876, and the New York state convention of March 27th elected delegates favorable to him, led by Alonzo B. Cornell, then naval officer of the customs, and at the Cincinnati convention held on June 14, 1876, sixty-nine of the delegates voted for Mr. Conkling, while one delegate, George William Curtis, voted for Benjamin H. Bristow, who was the candidate of the Reform Republi-

cans, so called, of New York and elsewhere. James G. Blaine was the leading candidate in the convention, so that the friends of all the others, Conkling of New York, Morton of Indiana, Bristow of Kentucky, Hartranft of Pennsylvania, and Hayes of Ohio, combined to defeat the candidate from Maine, who, nevertheless, came very near to the nomination, receiving on the seventh ballot 351 out of 756 votes, lacking only twenty of the number necessary to nominate.

How was Mr. Blaine defeated and Mr. Hayes nominated? The former's name begun with 296 votes on the first ballot and went up to 351 on the seventh. Mr. Hayes' name begun with sixty-four and went up to 384 on the seventh, which nominated him by twelve majority. When the necessary retirements of candidates in order to defeat Mr. Blaine began, and Morton's name with its eighty-five votes, Bristow's with ninety of its 111 votes, and Hartranft's with its fifty votes had been withdrawn, sixty-one of the seventy New York votes were cast, by Mr. Conkling's desire, for Mr. Hayes, and New York thus adversely decided the fate of Mr. Blaine and gave to the successful candidate his triumph.

Had it not been for the strong will of the masterful senator from New York, communicated to his supporters and to Secretary J. Donald Cameron of Pennsylvania, the result of the convention, by the free will of a decided majority of its delegates, would have given an overwhelming decision for Mr. Blaine. But Mr. Conkling and his lieutenants, saying to themselves, "Let us not forget," deliberately supplanted James G. Blaine as

the desired candidate of the Republicans of the country and named in his place Rutherford B. Hayes.

In the close political canvass that ensued in the state of New York—where Mr. Cornell had been a candidate for governor in the state convention but so opposed by the name of Mr. William M. Evarts, supported by the Reform Republicans led by Mr. Curtis, that his name was withdrawn and ex-Governor Morgan nominated—Messrs. Arthur and Cornell made greater exertions than they ever made in any other campaign; and subsequently General Arthur's activity in connection with the contested countings in the Southern states was of vital importance.

Seldom, if ever, in the history of politics in a republic has there been exhibited such ingratitude and injustice as are shown by the sequel of the tribulations through which Mr. Hayes came to be president, Mr. Evarts secretary of state, and John Sherman secretary of the treasury. Forgetful of the strange circumstances of the presidential nomination and election and the duty they obviously owed to the Republican party in New York, then in the minority, to reconcile factions and promote harmony in all directions, the officials I have named, urged forward by Mr. Curtis and his associates, deliberately decided to drive from their places Messrs. Arthur and Cornell and to transfer the power and patronage of their offices to the use of a minority faction in the Republican party.

This was not an easy thing to do, even for reformers willing to subordinate their pledges for reform to their unsubdued desire for spoils and factional power. Pres-

ident Hayes in his inaugural of March 5, 1877, had declared in favor of civil service reform ; and that every officer "should be secure in his tenure so long as his personal character remained untarnished and the performance of his duties satisfactory."

Yet the seizure of the spoils could not be forborne, and, as the characters of Arthur and Cornell could not be assailed, it was necessary to aver and make a show of proving that their duties at the custom house were not satisfactorily performed. This transparent comedy was quickly undertaken. Special agents and special commissions were set to work, spying, reporting, fault-finding, and condemning, but it took four reports of the John Jay commission to lay a basis upon which Secretary Sherman would venture to act. In September, 1877, Collector Arthur was requested to resign, yet this unsatisfactory officer was at the same time offered a foreign mission, a newspaper announcement having been made on the previous day that at a cabinet meeting it had been determined to remove him. When Mr. Arthur, under such conditions, declined voluntarily to retire, the hostile pursuit became fierce and relentless. On October 24th Theodore Roosevelt, father of President Roosevelt, was nominated to the senate for collector, and L. Bradford Prince for naval officer. On November 30th they were reported adversely by the committee on commerce, but no action was taken by the senate and the nominations failed with the session. December 6th they were renominated ; on December 11th reported adversely, and on December 12th rejected by a vote of twenty-five to thirty-one ; and no other

nominations were made, although the senate remained in session for more than six months. On July 11, 1878, and after its adjournment, Messrs. Arthur and Cornell were suspended and Edwin A. Merritt designated as collector and Silas W. Burt as naval officer, and they took possession of the offices. Their nominations were sent to the senate December 3, 1878, and reported adversely January 27, 1879, but the influence of the administration was sufficient to secure their confirmation on February 3, 1879, by a vote of thirty-three to twenty-four.

It can easily be understood that Collector Arthur made vigorous defence against the complaints of his official service. These related principally to the systems of removals and new appointments in the custom house, to promotions, and to various methods of administration; no one of the charges being in any respect serious in its nature and all being completely and conclusively refuted in a letter of Arthur to Secretary Sherman on November 23, 1877, and a letter to Senator Conkling, chairman of the committee on commerce, on January 21, 1879.

It may be safely said by the friends of Messrs. Arthur and Cornell that there is nothing, in the long list of complaints, of any gravity, or which in the slightest degree tends to impugn their reputations as upright customs officers, faithful in the highest degree to their duty to their superiors and to their country.

The elaborated criticisms of their conduct are nothing but trivial incidents, magnified and distorted, and reiterated after refutation, in order to constitute some pretence

for the foregone determination to remove faithful officers in violation of repeated public pledges to commit no such unjustifiable acts. The criticisms made no impression whatever upon the minds of senators. What secured the confirmation of Messrs. Merritt and Burt was the closing declaration of Secretary Sherman, in his letter to the senate of December 15, 1879, that the restoration of the suspended officers would create discord and contention, be unjust to the president and personally embarrassing to the secretary, and that, as Collector Arthur's term of service would expire December 17, 1879, his restoration would be temporary, as the president would send in another name or suspend him again after the adjournment of the senate.

Senator Sherman in his "Book of Recollections," published in 1895, gives chapter thirty-five to an effort to justify the removal of Arthur and Cornell. He might well be anxious to succeed in his attempt. When he conducted the removal to what he calls "the final triumph of President Hayes" he was an avowed candidate for president, not doubting that an Ohio president would be succeeded by another from Ohio, as indeed he was, but by Garfield and not by himself. When he wrote his chapter he must have realized that his unfortunate assault upon Arthur made the latter vice-president and president, and he could not but feel that the New York delegation to the convention of 1880, headed by Conkling and Arthur, had made inevitable his own defeat in that convention. But his attempted defense is fatal to him, and shows that the persistent efforts of the Hayes administration from 1877 to 1879 to displace

Arthur and Cornell were not an honest movement for civil service reform, but were, as I am sure and insist, a mere factional attempt to obtain the spoils of office and political power to be used in the coming presidential convention of 1880.

It is true that the movement began ostensibly to promote reforms in administration, and Mr. Sherman in his letter to Arthur of May 28, 1877, said that what was desired was a "reform of old abuses which existed many years before you became collector." But very soon President Hayes showed the object to be merely one of removal; and after reading the foregone conclusions of the Jay report of August 31, he announced his desire to "make a change in the three leading offices in the New York custom house." Mr. Sherman says of Mr. Hayes' decision: "He wished to place it upon the ground that he thought the public service would be best promoted by a general change; that new officers would be more likely to make the radical reforms required than those then in the custom house." On September 6th Mr. Sherman wrote Assistant Secretary McCormick, then near New York, that the public interests demanded the change; that there had been a cordial assent of the cabinet, and that "a public announcement of that character was authorized"; and he adds, "I hope General Arthur will be recognized in a most complimentary way."

Yet the plan of inducing Arthur and Cornell to resign did not make progress. Mr. Sherman says, "The president was quite willing to base his request for their resignation, not upon the ground that they were guilty

of the offences charged, but that new officers could probably deal with the reorganization of the custom house with more freedom and success than the incumbents." Mr. Sherman adds that he also saw General Arthur and "explained to him the view taken by the president and his desire not in any way to reflect upon the collector and his associates, Cornell and Sharpe," and he says that he believed that "these gentlemen would resign and that their character and merits would be recognized, possibly by appointment to other offices."

On October 15th he wrote to Arthur: "I regret to hear from Mr. Evarts that you decline the consulship at Paris, which I supposed would be very agreeable to you." Doubtless Mr. Evarts, in a humorous spirit and with a grave face, explained to Arthur the policy of his reform associates by saying: "Of course we must remove you. Our principle is against removals for political reasons only. Your principle favors such removals. Therefore we remove you in order to give our principle a good start. When we have taken possession of the offices on your principle we shall vigorously enforce our own."

It is difficult to imagine how all these proceedings can be treated as consistent with the ostentatiously proclaimed Hayes-Sherman fundamental principle of civil service reform—that incumbents of subordinate offices shall be secure in their places and free from political removals. In one place Mr. Sherman grotesquely says that there were "specific charges but of a general character." Elsewhere he grows bolder,

and incorrectly says "specific and definite charges were made against the incumbents." His true motive is apparent when he says that "it soon became manifest that these gentlemen had no purpose to resign, and that Senator Conkling intended to make a political contest against the policy of civil service reform inaugurated by President Hayes."

On January 31, 1879, he appealed to Senator Allison thus: "If the restoration of Arthur is insisted upon, the whole liberal element will be against us, and it will lose us tens of thousands of votes without doing a particle of good." "It will be a personal reproach to me." "Arthur will not go back into the office. This contest will be continued, and the only result of all this foolish madness will be to compel a Republican administration to appeal to a Democratic senate for confirmation of a collector at New York."

That is to say: "Four votes are necessary to change the rejection to a confirmation, and we stand ready to bargain with the Democrats to secure the four unless that number of Republicans will recede." What wonder that the power of the national administration obtained the four needed votes and four more, which raised the majority for the "principle of reform" to nine!

Mr. Sherman also wrote to Senator Morrill what he describes as "a much longer letter, giving reasons in detail in favor of confirmation, and containing specific charges of neglect of duty on the part of Arthur and Cornell, but I do not care to revive them."

This whole story is almost incredible, but it stands recorded in Mr. Sherman's deliberate words. First the

denial that there were charges, the request to resign and accept other honorable offices, and at last the revelation that charges were privately made which were concealed from the honorable gentlemen against whom they were made, and have not seen the light even to this day. It is easy to see the feelings and motives which influenced Mr. Sherman, when he says as to the last nominations, those of Merritt and Burt: "I had definitely made up my mind that if the senate again rejected them I would resign. I would not hold an office when my political friends forced me to act through unfriendly subordinates." Here behold the spirit of Mr. Sherman's kind of civil service reform. He should have said, "unfriendly subordinates who will work against my nomination for president in 1880." Finally, he attempts to felicitate himself that the result of the controversy with Arthur and Cornell "was supported by public opinion generally throughout the United States," and to prove his assertion adds only this: "I enclose a letter from John Jay upon the subject." This letter is one of congratulation that the custom house is no longer to be "a center of partisan political management." What a spectacle! Mr. Jay, as the author of the pretences for the proscription and as the whole public, approves of the methods by which the civil service reformers had wrested from the other side by duplicity and false pretence the weapons of factional political accomplishment.

ARTHUR'S NOMINATION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT.

Looking backward, after twenty-four years, it is interesting to see how surely and speedily came the vindication, which was inevitable as soon as the controversy between the administration and the wrongfully removed officials was remitted to the Republicans of New York for their deliberate opinion and their responsive action. Mr. Cornell was nominated for governor of New York September 3, 1879, and elected November 4, and Mr. Arthur was considered as a candidate for United States senator for the term to begin March 4, 1881.

Upon retiring from the office of collector, General Arthur resumed law practice as a member of the firm of Arthur, Phelps, Knevals & Ransom; but he continued to be active in politics, and in 1880 advocated the nomination of General Grant to succeed President Hayes. He was a delegate-at-large to the Chicago convention which met June 2, and during the heated preliminary contest before the Republican national committee, which threatened to result in the organization of two independent conventions, he conducted for his own side the conferences with the controlling anti-third-term delegates relative to the choice of a temporary presiding officer, and the arrangement of the preliminary roll of delegates in the cases to be contested in the convention. The result of the conferences was an agreement by which all danger was avoided; and when, upon the opening of the convention an attempt was made in consequence of a misunderstanding on the part of certain

Grant delegates to violate this agreement, he resolutely adhered to it, and insisted upon and secured its observance. Too much credit cannot be given to Mr. Arthur for his tactful and conciliatory course on this occasion.

The prolonged and bitter controversy in the national committee grew out of the refusal of Chairman Cameron to say that if the convention should divide upon the question of electing as chairman of the convention the nominee to be proposed by vote of the committee, being Senator Hoar, an Edmunds delegate, against any Grant delegate who might be proposed, he would not undertake to enforce the unit rule. The question seemed likely to be a vital one. A vast majority of the committee were determined to run no risks, and even went so far as to decide that a new chairman of the committee must be elected to call the convention to order. The arrangement of the preliminary roll of delegates from certain states included those from Utah and Louisiana. The controversies over these two questions were adjusted with difficulty, but they were adjusted on the very morning of the first meeting of the convention, Mr. Arthur representing the Grant delegates. His insistence upon the observance of the agreement which had been made took place in connection with the colloquy between Senator Frye and Senator Conkling at the beginning of the proceedings, when, by accident, the territory of Utah had not been called. What the report does not show is Mr. Arthur's vigorous and imperative remonstrance with Mr. Conkling, which led to the latter's withdrawal of his objection to Mr. Frye's request in behalf of Utah.

As the convention proceeded, it appeared that a majority of the delegates had combined to defeat General Grant for a third term, and that a majority, differently made up, had combined to defeat Mr. Blaine ; and that the nomination of Mr. Sherman was impossible.

When, on the thirty-sixth ballot, General Garfield, a citizen of the West, was selected as the most available nominee by a combination of the Blaine delegates and other anti-Grant delegates, the nomination of Arthur for vice-president, as an advocate of Grant and a resident of the state of New York, was inevitable. Before the roll-call began, the foregone conclusion was evident. He received 468 votes against 283 for all others, and the nomination was made unanimous.

The canvass which ensued was closely contested, with General Hancock as the Democratic candidate for president, but the Republican party became well united and was successful. Grant, Conkling, and Blaine gave willing support to the ticket. New York state gave Garfield and Arthur a plurality of 21,000 against a plurality in 1876 for Tilden and Hendricks of 32,000.

Familiar to every person present are the events so rapidly following the inauguration on March 4, 1881, of Garfield and Arthur ;—the factional controversy in the Republican party, the nomination by Garfield for collector of New York of William H. Robertson, the leader of the anti-third-term delegates in the Chicago convention, the resignation of Senators Conkling and Platt, their defeat for reëlection in the legislature of New York, although actively aided by Vice-President Arthur, the assassination of Garfield, July 2, 1881, his

death on September 19th, and Arthur's elevation from the vice-presidency to the presidency.

ARTHUR AS PRESIDENT.

Naturally and wisely the administration brought into power by such extraordinary events was conservative and conciliatory in every possible direction. If an opportunity for turning the tables by one faction in the dominant political party upon another faction was afforded by the tragic events of a few months, President Arthur refused to take the advantages thus offered to him. He recognized little if any difference between the faction to which he had belonged and that which he had opposed, and he endeavored to obliterate all distinctions within his party. There is an impression that Mr. Conkling, then in private life, urged that a less conciliatory policy should be pursued, but I have no evidence that such a desire was expressed. At all events, the desire, if it existed, had no influence upon the president, who, however, treated his former leader with real consideration, nominating him as a justice of the supreme court, which office he did not accept, but he did not give way to the urgings, if any were made, for the removal of Collector Robertson, who served from August 1, 1881, to July 1, 1885, or for the indulgence in any other revengeful or factional act.

Nor did the times or circumstances demand that there should be an administration straining for effect or exhibiting exciting deeds or promoting radical measures; but the contrary course was the true and patriotic conduct. The whole service of President Arthur seems to

have been performed with wisdom and ability. Between his participation on October 19, 1881, in the dedication of the Yorktown monument and his address as a part of the ceremonies attending the completion of the Washington monument on February 21, 1885, there was a long line of administrative acts, none of which have been severely criticised or justly condemned from any quarter.

The administration was emphatically one of peace and quietness. Mr. Depew, in the address to which I have alluded, speaking succinctly of the acts of Arthur, names two which he says are of dramatic picturesqueness and historical significance; one, at the Yorktown centennial, when the president directed the firing of a salute in honor of the British flag, "and especially as a mark of the profound respect entertained by the American people for the illustrious sovereign and gracious lady who sits upon the British throne"; the other, the insistence, as the last act of his administration, on the restoration of citizen Ulysses S. Grant in his old age and sickness to be again the general of the United States army.

One assertion I may confidently make, namely, that each department of the government was honestly, energetically, and faithfully administered, with the aid and to the satisfaction of our president:—the state department by Theodore Frelinghuysen; the treasury department by Charles J. Folger, Walter Q. Gresham, and Hugh McCulloch; the war department by Robert T. Lincoln (who was a member of both cabinets, from March 4, 1881, to March 4, 1885); the department of

justice by Benjamin H. Brewster ; the post-office department by Timothy O. Howe, Walter Q. Gresham, and Frank Hatton ; and the interior department by Henry M. Teller.

ARTHUR'S REVIVAL OF THE NAVY.

Because to the credit of the administration of President Arthur belongs the beginning of the reconstruction of the American navy, which so well served its purpose in battle in the year 1898, I may be pardoned, especially as I have been requested so to do, for saying a few words concerning that important and satisfactory revival.

In the days of wooden ships and ancient cannon the United States navy made a high reputation among the nations,—in the War of the Revolution, in the War of 1812, and in the War for the Union in 1861 ; and the merchant vessels of America also came to be superior to those of any other country.

But during the War for the Union our commercial vessels had to encounter the corsairs of the Confederacy fitted out in British shipyards, and therefore such merchant vessels disappeared from the carrying trade of the world. About this time, largely from the combat of the iron-clad *Monitor* of Ericsson with the iron-covered *Merrimack*, it became apparent that the day of wooden battleships had passed. Why the United States so long delayed recognition of the radical change in the character of warships and their armament it is difficult to determine, but in 1882 the lamentable condition of our navy was thus officially described. We had thirty-three

wooden steamships, but it was said : "They are of low speed, their engines are not modern, only fourteen being compound, and their steaming, manœuvring, and destructive powers are inferior to those of the present warships of other navies." There were also thirteen single turreted monitors. It was said : "These monitors were built in 1862 and 1863 ; have no speed ; carry each two large smooth-bore guns of small power and short range ; and have been mostly laid up since their use in the late war. As they are our only vessels for harbor defense they have not yet been broken up." The guns of the navy were a large number of smooth-bore muzzle-loading cannon, and some Parrott muzzle-loading forty and eighty pound rifles, and a few converted rifles, only thirty-six of which were breech-loading. Truly it was said, "With not one modern high-powered cannon in the navy, and with only eighty-seven guns worth retaining, the importance of action for the procurement of naval ordnance seems apparent, if the navy is to longer survive."

It is more than probable that the delay for sixteen years from 1865 to 1881 in recognizing changed conditions, in casting aside the old navy and beginning a new navy, grew out of the unwillingness to supersede the system then existing of building at large cost and repairing extravagantly and with dilatoriness the wooden vessels of the navy in the vast navy yards of the country. But fortunately the work of dispensing with obsolete ships and guns and building new ones was not too long delayed. Assistant Secretary Roosevelt, in a paper printed at the government printing

office in 1897, recites the recommendations in favor of a strong navy of the various presidents,—Washington, John Adams, Madison, Monroe, Tyler, Polk, Lincoln, Grant, and Arthur, and says:

“After the close of the Civil War there came a period of reaction and decline. In spite of President Grant’s repeated warnings and protests, a spirit of economy prevailed, and our navy was suffered to sink below the level of that of even the third-rate powers. Then, in the middle of President Arthur’s administration, the turn came; the people and their representatives awoke to what was demanded by national self-respect, the foundations of our present navy were laid, and ever since then under every administration the work of building it up has gone steadily on.”

The first actual movement for a radical change and the construction of a new navy not only originated with President Arthur and Secretary William H. Hunt, but it proceeded in a general way upon the lines laid down by an advisory board organized by that secretary on the 29th of June, 1881. The act of congress of August 5, 1882, was the initial legislation for the discontinuance of extensive repairs of old wooden ships, the diminution of navy yard expenses, and the beginning of the construction of a new navy of modern steel ships and guns. Here we find for the first time in the construction of vessels of the United States the adoption of homogeneous iron or mild steel of great tensile strength and of great ductility.

Nor was the desire of the administration confined to a revival of the navy alone, but the report of the navy

department in 1882 asserts that the "interests of the navy are inseparably involved with those of the commercial marine of the country."

The spirit of the Arthur administration was further shown by the following unequivocal declarations of the head of the navy department: "If the naval establishment is not to be made effective, it should be discontinued, and the fifteen millions annually expended should be reserved to procure, in national emergencies, the assistance of foreign ships and guns. If governmental measures are not soon adopted to promote the carrying trade and to arrest the disappearance of American ships from the ocean, we shall soon cease to be a seafaring people and shall not need to maintain a navy of our own. These are strong expressions, but they are justified and required by the present condition of our naval and maritime interests."

These, then, were the beginnings of the new modern navy. The sequel the world knows. In the senate on July 15, 1892, I had the privilege of saying :

"Assuming that all the old wooden vessels will soon go out of existence and that two years from now we shall have no vessels except the new ones already built or authorized by congress, there will be a fleet constructed in ten years which will be the equal of any fleet of a similar general and diversified character that can be made up from any navy in the world."

On May 13th I expressed an opinion as to our future policy :

"Coast defence should be amply provided for. All the arts of naval warfare should be kept alive among

our people. Industries necessary to the construction of any kind of war vessels or guns should be domesticated. We should restore the flag of our merchant ships and revive the carrying trade in American vessels in all the waters and in all the commercial ports of the globe, and protect our mercantile marine when thus reëstablished.

“We should construct and maintain a navy superior to that of any nation of the western hemisphere, and to that of the nation owning the island of Cuba; and there we can stop, it is to be hoped, for many years.”

Six years later, on March 7, 1898, I ventured to predict as follows with reference to the coming naval war :

“Spain will probably not release her hold upon Cuba without a collision of war with the United States which will last from fifteen minutes to three months; no longer. Our Asiatic squadron from safe harbors will watch its chance to descend upon the Philippine Islands, where rebellion will break out anew and they will be lost to Spain. . . . The short conflict will soon show Spain her helplessness, and she will yield to the inevitable and make peace and acknowledge the independence of Cuba and Porto Rico. . . . She will give one gasp, strike one blow, and a short conflict will ensue, the end of which will come almost before we realize that it has begun. This is my prediction and confident hope.”

Thoughtful and imaginative persons who like to speculate about what might have been can find an interesting field of conjecture in the inquiry whether, if there had been four years' more delay in the destruc-

tion of the old navy and the beginning of the construction of the new navy, the Spanish sovereignty in Cuba would have been terminated within a half century, or in the Philippines within a century. Those senators and representatives in congress who in the April days of 1898 pressed for an immediate war as the only means of ending Spanish dominion in this hemisphere, believed that every day's delay was perilous. So it undoubtedly was. If there had been further delay, Spain within a few months would have aroused a concert of the Continental powers to ask the United States not to liberate Cuba, and Spain might have remunerated her allies by the partition among them of the Philippines.

We began our navy none too soon. We promptly made it larger than the navy of the nation which owned the island of Cuba. The ships and guns of Dewey at Manila, and of Sampson at Santiago, conferred unsurpassed glory upon the American navy in a war the most disinterested in the annals of the world's history.

The last report of the navy department, that of Secretary Moody of December, 1902, shows that we have eleven vessels classed as first rates, being nine battleships and two armored cruisers, carrying 360 modern high-power guns as their main batteries; fifteen second-rate war vessels, consisting of eight protected cruisers, one second-class battleship, two monitors, and four converted cruisers; seventy-two third-rate and fifty-six fourth-rate fighting ships; thirty-three torpedo boats; and miscellaneous vessels without number; while there are under construction thirty-four combatant ships and

thirteen torpedo-boat destroyers, and seven torpedo boats. The country may well be satisfied with the progress which has been made in twenty years in the construction of the navy necessary to make the United States again a great sea power, and of the use which has so far been made of its new navy. The progress has been unintermitting, and has been continued alike by both political parties and all presidents and secretaries of the navy.

ARTHUR'S SPECIAL RELATION TO SLAVERY AND THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

But while erecting to-day's memorial to Chester A. Arthur, in order to remind those who knew him of their associate and friend and to challenge the attention of the present and future generations to the memory of one we delight to honor, we do not attach the most importance to his acts as president during three and one half years of unpretentious administration marked by no exciting events or startling crises;—and as he so soon after retirement lost health and life, there are no subsequent events except his patience in sickness and his resignation as death approached from which his admirable character can be learned and understood.

What he was and what he did as president resulted from the character of the man, and that character was fully formed when at the age of fifty-one he became president. It can be best understood by contemplating his early hostility to American chattel slavery and his unrestrained zeal for the cause of the Union in the war which the aggressions of that slavery brought upon the country.

Unquestionably the greatest fact in the 115 years of our national life has been the destruction of slavery through the greatest civil war the world has ever seen. The change from bondage of five millions of men, women, and children to free citizens was accomplished by the expenditure in war on the winning side of 300,000 lives and 6,000 millions of treasure, and attended on the losing side by nearly as great a loss of life and by the almost total destruction of property values among nine millions of people.

In a Decoration day address at Nashua, N. H., on May 30, 1889, I endeavored faithfully to depict the origin and growth of the anti-slavery struggle. After slavery had grown from a feeble paternal institution to become through the invention of the cotton-gin a source of wealth to the South, it was also soon seen that disproportionate political power in the new nation had been unexpectedly given to that section by the clause in the constitution which, in fixing a basis for the number of representatives in congress and presidential electors from each state, had added to the white population three-fifths of all other persons,—meaning the slaves.

With this wealth and power at their command, the slave aristocracy took possession of the national government in all its branches. When northern consciences were aroused southern interests met every tendency by unhesitating measures, and it became the policy of the South that the slave states should always equal, and if possible should exceed, the free states in number.

In the beginning the thirteen states were seven free,

six slave; but in 1812 Louisiana was admitted and thenceforth the new states came only in pairs.—Kentucky and Vermont, Tennessee and Ohio, Indiana and Mississippi, Illinois and Alabama, Maine and Missouri (the free states here in 1820 gaining the promise of freedom to all that remained of the Louisiana purchase except Missouri), Arkansas and Michigan, Florida and Iowa, Texas and Wisconsin.

When Chester A. Arthur, a boy of fifteen, began to take an interest in the politics of his country, the admission of Texas was being forced by the South with the purpose of providing at some time four slave states from Texan territory, and this was promised in the act of admission. By the time Arthur had become twenty-one and prepared to cast his first vote, northern fears for the dissolution of the Union had resulted in the compromises of 1850, by which, however, the North had gained one advantage which the sudden growth of California had made possible, and the free states again exceeded the slave states in number—sixteen to fifteen—the South obtaining the organization of New Mexico, which included what is now Arizona, and of Utah, as territories with no prohibition of slavery therein; the scandalous and corrupt payment for nothing of ten millions of dollars to Texas; and a new fugitive slave law.

Now in truth came the initial mistake of the slave-holders which ultimately led, within a little over a decade, to the total destruction of slavery. Had the South then stood still and remained on the defensive the accursed institution would have existed at least

over into the twentieth century; but the South had become proud and haughty, the North had become timid; the "doughface" period had arrived; and under Pierce and Buchanan, two presidents, aided by Stephen A. Douglas, a presidential aspirant, the announcement was made that the pledges of 1820 and 1850 were to be deliberately broken, and that from territory then dedicated to freedom Kansas and Nebraska should be formed and admitted with slavery, the free state preponderance destroyed, and a majority of the states for the first time in our history given to the slave owners.

The course and outcome of this new contest for slavery-nationalization and extension is a vivid picture in the eyes of all Americans, not only of those who saw it, but of those younger citizens who know it only from narration; the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the administration of Pierce and the bloody struggle upon the plains of Kansas, the administration of Buchanan, the Lecompton constitution, the Dred Scott decision, the rise of the Republican party, the advent of Abraham Lincoln, the disappearance of the "doughface," who wished to concede everything to slavery, and of the professional Union-saver, who was willing to give pledges for perpetual slavery, and the irresistible determination of the North that slavery should be restricted within its existing limits, the consecration to liberty of all the great unorganized territories of the United States, and the ascendancy of universal freedom in America.

Even this determination of the North would not have

brought on the war for slavery if it had not been for the folly and madness of the slaveholders themselves. After the election and before the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln compromisers again appeared. Virginia called a voluntary conference, known as the peace congress, wherein were represented thirteen free and seven slave states, which recommended new guarantees for the return of fugitive slaves and for the perpetuation of slavery in the states. The Crittenden compromise, giving broad similar guarantees, would have been adopted by congress if it had been voted for by all the slave states; and congress did adopt a proposition for an amendment to the constitution whereby any future amendment giving the United States power to abolish slavery in the states was forbidden. In addition to this prohibition the North was willing (1) to unite in a call for a convention of the states to settle differences as suggested by Kentucky; (2) to agree to pay the value of all fugitive slaves not returned to bondage, and (3) to admit the vast territory of New Mexico, including what is now Arizona, as a slave state.

But whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. Southern leaders were infatuated with the idea of starting and controlling for their own aggrandizement and power a great slave nation on this continent. They knew that all the great governments of Europe, except that of Russia, desired the downfall of the American Union in order to prevent the growth of a great free republic anywhere in the world and in order to afford to themselves the opportunities which the Monroe doctrine did not allow for colonization by the

nations of Europe, within all the available territory of North and South America.

So the South would accept no new compromise with the Union to remain undisturbed. Fatuously they determined to meet by secession the issue which, in 1858, Lincoln at Springfield and Seward at Rochester had foreshadowed—whether as Mr Lincoln put the question, the government could permanently endure half slave and half free; whether the further spread of slavery should be arrested and it should enter into the course of ultimate extinction, or whether, as Mr. Seward stated the case “the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandise only, or else the rye fields and wheat fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more the markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men.”

The Southerners saw the force of the logic of these great anti-slavery statesmen and, to avoid the ultimate result predicted by them, decided to attempt to dissolve the union of the states, to allow a northern free nation, and to establish a southern slave nation. So resulted the organization of the Southern Confederacy with Jefferson Davis as its president, Robert E. Lee, a West Point graduate, an officer of the Union army, as the military chieftain of the rebellion against his flag, and with slavery as the chief corner-stone of the nation. The stars and stripes were fired on at Fort Sumter and

the great conflict came on, the end of which left the Southern Confederacy but a name, while the United States stood a free republic with no vestige of slavery remaining to pollute her soil, degrade her national conscience, or stain her national honor.

It is easy to see the effect produced upon the mind and heart of a sensitive boy like Arthur, who, in 1844, begun to comprehend the significance of the political events going forward under his keen scrutiny;—the election of Polk and the annexation of Texas through a war with Mexico in order to enlarge the domain of slavery; and who, in 1852, as a new voter, found his country renewedly pledged to the return of escaped and hunted fugitive slaves to their cruel masters.

As soon as the South began its still further aggressions, he entered with all his soul and strength into the conflict on the side of humanity. We can see the influence derived from his father's anti-slavery associations with his friend, Gerritt Smith, and his participation in the early anti-slavery movements. We can see Arthur after casting his first vote for president in 1852 enlisting himself as a young lawyer, the partner of the Free Soiler, Erastus D. Culver, in the successful efforts made to liberate the slaves of Jonathan Lemmon brought from Virginia to New York on the way to Texas. Here, in these initial labors for the down-trodden, grew the character of Arthur which made him strong and great and noble. It is no wonder that when slavery raised its mailed hands to destroy the Union in order to extend slavery, Arthur, who had given his sympathies and his friendship to the oppressed, should

enter with his whole might into the war for the Union. The character thus formed governed him in all his actions as a public man in later life ; and it is this character which to-day most commands our admiration and respect.

It is not inappropriate here and now to conjecture what Arthur would do, or try to do, or wish to do if he lived in this beginning of a new century when the condition of the colored race as defined and supposed to be made secure at the close of the war for the Union by three amendments of the national constitution, is being radically and wickedly changed.

The thirteenth amendment gave freedom to five millions of slaves. The fourteenth guaranteed to the new citizens the equal protection of the laws, with the whites, including due process of law when charged with crime. The fifteenth gave them the right of suffrage as the most potent protection when exercised, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

But now so it is that the existing ten millions of colored citizens are to live and endure under three new principles whose advocates deliberately defy the constitution of the country. First, they are not to vote. This is the avowed purpose of the controlling southern whites. In some states they are kept from the ballot-box under cunningly contrived constitutions and laws which are in direct conflict with the fifteenth amendment. In other states intimidation and violence continue to be the method of suppressing the colored votes. The suppression is overwhelming, radical, and complete by direct purpose of the South. The fifteenth

amendment says that congress shall enforce the right of suffrage by appropriate laws. Congress wholly omits to do this, and under President Cleveland, in 1894, the national election laws then existing were repealed. The North continues to submit to their repeal. By the suppression of the suffrage, southern states obtain a representative in congress and a presidential elector for every 200,000 of the colored people—fifty congressmen and fifty electors in all for the ten millions; the power of which fifty congressmen and fifty electors is controlled and exercised by the white southerners. Possibly these fifty electors will change the result of the next presidential election. The North continues to submit to this wrong.

Second, emboldened by northern apathy in reference to the suppression of the votes of the colored people, the South has adopted another principle. The colored men are not to have the equal protection of the laws in the exercise of their fundamental rights as citizens. When charged with crime they are not to be duly indicted and formally tried by jury. They are to be charged with crime by irresponsible mobs; they are to be found guilty by the outcries of the same mob, and they are to be summarily put to death by the violent hands of the same mob,—by shooting, hanging, burning, with maiming, mutilation, and excruciating torture. This is almost the universal practice as to every colored citizen charged with a crime of violence. This principle is generally adopted at the South, and it is extending northward. No power of the nation is exerted to oppose it. No sincere and earnest declaration

is made against it by any political party willing to stake its whole existence on the issue of the conflict, as were the men of 1856 and 1860.

Third, not even is the thirteenth amendment abolishing slavery sacred in the sight of the oppressors of the colored people of America. The infamous vagrancy laws by which, in 1865, it was sought to re-enslave the newly emancipated colored man, but which were, in 1867, swept away by the rising tide of northern indignation, are being re-enacted thirty-eight years later in some of the southern states; and the practice of peonage—the virtual enslavement of colored laborers—has been going forward for several years without discovery by the North, consequently without resistance.

No man desires less than I to revive sectional issues, with the war for secession more than a third of a century behind us, and a history rather than an experience to most of the American people,—only a history to the active, influential, and powerful men who control America to-day. But the wrongs to which I am calling attention are real and terrifying, and they will not down because it is disagreeable for the politicians of both parties to face the uncomfortable situation. Because the negro is black the Republican party has existed and practically controlled the government for forty-seven years with great power, prominence, and profit to the greatest Americans of the last half century. It will not serve for the Republican party now to find fault because the negro is black, and to abandon him to subjugation, peonage, and barbarous slaughter without trial because his oppressors are southern whites.

If Abram Lincoln and his associates had lived till now how would they have met the new southern American principles; (1) no suffrage for the colored men; (2) trials by mobs and lynchings for the colored men; (3) peonage for the colored men? How would General Grant and his associates meet them if alive to-day? How would Chester A. Arthur and his associates meet them if alive to-day? How will President Roosevelt and his associates, who are alive to-day and making history, meet the flagrant violations of constitutional right and privilege which look the American rulers boldly in the face and are more clearly visible to us than are the murders by the Turks of Bulgarian and Armenian Christians, and the slaughter of unoffending Jews by misguided Russian subjects? President Arthur clearly saw the issue which was coming when in his letter of July 15, 1880, accepting his nomination, he said: "It is a suggestive and startling thought that the increased power derived from the enfranchisement of a race now denied, its share in governing the country—wielded by those who lately sought the overthrow of the government—is now the sole reliance to defeat the party which represented the sovereignty and nationality of the American people in the greatest crisis of our history."

It is true that the result of a presidential election has not yet been changed by the increased representation given by reason of the colored inhabitants, but such an outcome is not improbable in 1904. If the white men of the solid South take possession of the presidency by an electoral majority of ninety or less, it will be seen

that the work has been done by the fifty electors who represent ten millions of colored people, substantially all of whose legal voters would vote the other way, if not, as Arthur charged, "debarred and robbed of their voice and their vote." To keep the colored man from the polls he must be held in terror of the whites, and to arouse and keep alive that terror any colored man obnoxiously active in politics will be charged, truly or falsely, with crime, and tried and lynched by mobs. To the peril which Arthur so clearly pointed out, and to avert which he recommended new legislation in his message of December, 1883, the northern states of the Union cannot be too soon or too thoroughly aroused.

Since these words were written President Roosevelt has spoken unmistakably in his letter to Governor Durbin of Indiana. The president shows the tendency of lynchings and the disregard of law which they engender toward the destruction of civilized government and the substitution of savagery. It cannot be possible that the states of the Union and the national government of the United States will allow the twentieth century to long continue to witness the lynchings with which the century has so inauspiciously opened. Where there is a will there can be found a way. The president being the leader, the American people will follow till the accursed and demoniac spirit which is now abroad in this land is exorcised and driven out.

ARTHUR'S TRAITS OF CHARACTER AS DESCRIBED BY HIS FRIENDS.

Indulge me a few additional moments in which to speak of the character of Arthur, as it appeared to me

and to others who knew him with equal or greater intimacy. In Mr. Depew's address at Albany, he said: "Tact, sense, and quick appreciation of the right were qualities he possessed in such high degree that they were the elements of his success, not only at the bar, but in the administration of public trusts." "He was capable of the greatest industry and courage." "He said to me early in his administration, 'My sole ambition is to enjoy the confidence of my countrymen.' Toward this noble ideal he strove with undeviating purpose."

In Mr. Brewster's address at Albany he spoke of Arthur's "high qualities, his magnanimity, his greatness." "His purpose was the public good, not the perpetuation of party rule or personal power." "His only law of official or personal life was to think the truth, act the truth, and speak the truth." "His mind was very prompt. He was resolute upon all principles of general public policy; but where his act would prejudice persons to their injury, such was the benevolence and gentleness of his nature that he would hesitate and act with reluctance. But when he did act he acted firmly always. He was stern with himself, but liberal and forbearing with others." "He had not a mean, unmanly element in his character." "He was heroic, but not ostentatious." "These fine qualities of his character were not unconsecrated by religious convictions." "He was trained in a home of religious teaching, by a father who taught him and others the truths of revealed religion." "By these convictions he lived and died." Similar opinions Mr. Brewster had

expressed on May 31, 1886 (while Arthur was alive), in a private letter, in which he said :

"This much I will ever say of General Arthur : I have never known a man for whom I had a stronger sense of respect and affection. The tenor of his life was noble. He was forbearing with others, but stern with himself. His aims were high. His ways were direct and open. His purpose just, rational, and generous. His mind calm and clear, his heart pure."

Postmaster-General Hatton wrote to me on June 1, 1886 : "The country well knows under what trying circumstances Arthur went into the White House, and how grandly he conducted himself during the dark days immediately following Garfield's death. At the time he took his seat, the party of which he had been a distinguished leader was distracted and divided, and there were not many who thought it would again have a chance to win a national victory ; and there were few of its leading men who would at that time have cared for a nomination. By his wise, conservative, patriotic, and unfactional course all admit that he made possible a Republican victory in 1884. The general features of his administration are well known to the country. During his entire term there was peace at home and abroad, and in his administration of the financial affairs of the nation business men had the most supreme confidence. His leading appointments were approved by the country. Especially is this true of his judicial appointments. No president was ever more careful or more intelligent in his selection of judges for the federal bench, and no political influence served to swerve him

in making these appointments. No man ever went into the White House under more unfavorable circumstances, and no man ever left it with a cleaner record, and with the confidence of the people to a greater extent than did President Arthur."

The one person best qualified to speak deliberately of Arthur was Secretary Lincoln, who was selected for the war department by General Garfield, and had the distinction of being the only member of the cabinet who remained in office under Arthur, whose confidence and affection he possessed in the fullest possible measure, and with whom he enjoyed unequaled intimacy. On June 7, 1886, Mr. Lincoln wrote to me: "The administration was remarkable for the absence of the possibility of imputations upon the conduct of any prominent member of it, either in the performance of his appropriate functions, or in relation to the succession. It is a general feeling that the circumstances of Mr. Arthur's accession were handled by him with a marvelous discretion, and this wise discretion in all his public acts, and an avoidance of mere political display, were the chief characteristics of his administration. Mr. Arthur was, in my judgment, guided by lofty ideas of his duties, and was gifted with great discretion."

Fortunately we are privileged to have Mr. Lincoln with us to-day, and I believe that his estimate of the president whom we loved so much, and who returned our affection without stint, will be more reliable in its conclusions than those which any other associate of Arthur can give.

Secretary Teller's high opinion was deliberate

and most sincere. He said: "I think he was in all his dealings the fairest and most just man I ever knew."

Mr. Root, in his address of presentation to New York city of the statue of Arthur, adverted to "the unusual esteem and admiration accorded to him by the whole people in his later years—not a revelation, but a recognition, of his character and qualities," and specified "his clear and bright intelligence, his commanding character, the sweetness and gentleness of his disposition, the rich stores of his cultivated mind, the grace and charm of his courtesy, his grave and simple dignity, and his loyal and steadfast friendship."

He also said: "His actions were informed and guided by absolute self-devotion to the loftiest conception of his great office." "He was wise in statesmanship, and firm and effective in administration." "Good causes found in him a friend, and bad measures met in him an unyielding opponent." "The genuineness of his patriotism, the integrity of his purpose, and the wisdom of his conduct changed general distrust to universal confidence, re-established popular belief in the adequacy of our constitutional system in all exigencies, and restored an abiding trust in the perpetuity of our government. He himself greatly aided to make true the memorable words of his inaugural, 'Men may die, but the fabrics of our free institutions remain unshaken.' The strain of that terrible ordeal and the concentrated and unremitting effort of those burdened years exhausted the vital forces of his frame, and brought him to the grave in the meridian of his days. He gave his life to his

country as truly as one who dies from wounds or disease in war."

My own estimate, written immediately after Arthur passed from earth, was not extravagant or too eulogistic to be reiterated after the lapse of seventeen years:

"No human being who knew President Arthur, either from personal acquaintance or from studying his character as developed in his official life, will fail to mourn his death as that of a true and good man, honest, upright, and faithful in the performance of every private and public duty.

"His early home training, by a father who was a clergyman of high literary as well as religious culture, made him a young man of lofty aspirations and pure principles. He was also subjected to anti-slavery influences, which took deep root in his mind and caused him, as the first work of his manhood, to espouse the cause and secure the freedom of the Lemmon slaves; and he continued always radically and intensely hostile to the nation's crime of slavery.

"In the practice of his profession of the law he developed learning, sagacity, and the faculty of cool judgment, combined with remarkable persistency, which, notwithstanding he never became a noted advocate, made his legal career remarkably successful. His hatred of slavery naturally brought him actively into the last great political struggle made by the South for the extension of the atrocious system into free territory. When the slaveholders' rebellion broke out he held the office of quartermaster-general of New York, under Gov. E. D. Morgan, and threw his whole soul into his

work of sending the soldiers of that state to the field of battle.

“As collector of New York he made a record which is not surpassed by that of any who preceded or have followed him. He was a model public official, and his conduct may be searched in vain for a proven error or offence.

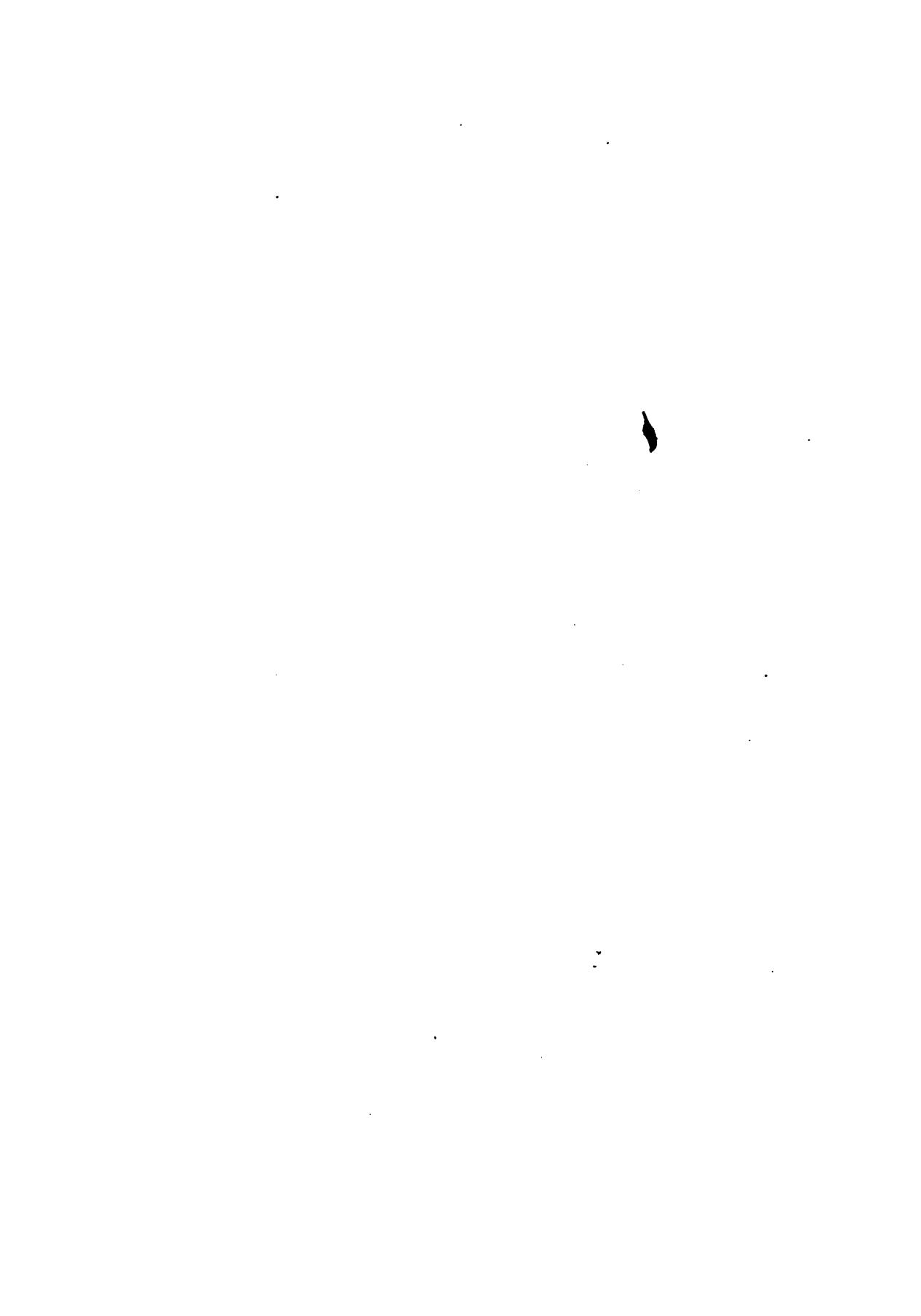
“As president of the United States, succeeding as vice-president to the place of an assassinated president, whose death caused the greatest public excitement and apprehension, he comported himself most worthily in his high office. He gained the confidence of the whole people. He exhibited the highest sense of public duty. He made himself president of the nation, and not of a party, still less of a faction within his party, while he yet violated no real obligations to the friends of his past. He gave the country an administration with which little fault has been found; of which no just complaint has been made; and which cannot be tarnished by any of the changes of time.

“He wore out his life by his assiduous devotion to the duties of his office, which gave him no opportunity for exercise or rest. During the later months of his fatal illness he exhibited in the highest degree that serene patience and self-control which had characterized his whole career; and he died as he had lived, a courteous Christian gentleman.

“We bid farewell to a generous and noble spirit. All who have had the precious privilege of seeing his inner life and of comprehending his soul’s high aims will gain patience and strength from his example; and

his countrymen can never fail to learn wisdom and patriotism while contemplating the life and death of one who served them faithfully and nobly, according to the capacity and light which were given him by his Maker."

Almost unwillingly do I close. Impressed by the emotions which accompany thoughts of Arthur and any effort to speak of his life and character, I can truly say, as did Mr. Brewster at Albany : "My heart is full of sorrow, my eyes are filled with tears"—as I give my last earthly tribute to my considerate superior, my charming comrade, my gentle friend, whose noble qualities of heart and mind are imperishably impressed upon the memories of all his fellow-men, whom he delighted to help and honor during his life of patient service for those he loved and for his country. He has gone to a celestial region. He will not come back to us. But we shall go to him ; and we may reverently hope to renew our joyous companionship in our new home in a bright star of God's firmament ; in a House of Many Mansions eternal in the Heavens.





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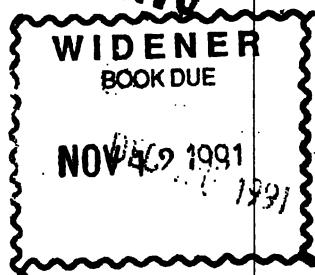
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